PUDUKKOTTAI STATE

WAR INFORMATION BUREAU

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LECTURE XXVII.

A STOCK-TAKING.

MANY of the world's great journals did what we are going to attempt to-day some four months ago. They took stock of the first year of the war, but, less fortunate than we are, they had to paint their picture in the middle of the Battle of BRITAIN. War then was almost at the height of its second paroxysm; the bogey of the much-advertised Pincer-Movement hovered over every computation of chances; the American people (I do not say the American Government) fiddled over the impending Presidential election while the remaining habitations of Liberty burned; and our once great ally, FRANCE, looked like becoming an enemy.

We are luckier, in that we take stock during a holiday—if the levity may be pardoned. Except for the minor—but vastly significant—campaigns in LIBYA and ALBANIA, there is a distinct reining-in of the charge of great events, and we have time to sketch a couple of pictures entitled 'Then' and 'Now', before the steeds of war once more take hold of their bits.

We choose this opportunity, also, because these Lectures and Bulletins have just run a full six months course during which you have been plied with various more or less unconnected subjects, the choice of which was dictated approximately by the course of contemporary events.

We now feel that some sort of summary of the outcome of those events, and a sketch of the immediate prospect, may be welcomed by our listeners and readers in the State.

Let us proclaim at once—and with most grateful hearts—that that prospect is a very great deal brighter than it was when we began our task of disseminating reliable information about the war, in PUDUKKOTTAI STATE. Week after week for months we tramped the country, appealing for steadiness of mind, loyalty to His Highness, the Government of India and His Majesty the King-Emperor, for co-operation with the Empire's war effort and for a conscious confidence amounting to actual courage; and all this at a time when the world's news gave us very few *bons bouches* to chew upon. To-day we are actually just *beginning* to savour the fruits of victory—and we do not say this merely because the Union Jack yesterday flew in Fort BARDIA from a mast from which the Italian flag had just crawled down. General Wavell's magnificent campaign in LIBYA is only one section of the composite picture which we propose to substitute for that grim canvas that hung in the frame of history when this War Information Bureau first came into being in early July last.

THE PREFACE. We must start a little further back than that. You all know when and how the greatest war of all history began. Nazi intransigeance in the Free City of DANZIG and preposterous demands by Hitler from POLAND, were the immediate occasion. But the war from the German point of view began—and was nearly won—long before that. The notorious 'New Order' was already being envisaged when the Germans occupied the RUHR, when AUSTRIA was annexed, and when CZECHOSLOVAKIA was brutally overrun. If only the British and French Governments and diplomats of those days had been able to comprehend the truths which hundreds of international rapporteurs were pouring into the world's press for years, we might have been spared the ruinous self-satisfaction of privileged parliamentary majorities with their 'anything but Bolshevism' obsessions; the incredibly inept experiment of disarmament when potential enemies were re-arming; the fatuous theories of 'collective security' and 'appeasement'; and the horrifying loss of prestige sustained by the forces of Honour and Humanity when the League of Nations collapsed after the Abyssinian affair, or since that dreadful business at MUNICH. We were not spared these things;

the Democracies and their diplomats could not, or would not, see the signs; and now almost every nation is at war or on the verge of war.

THE FIRST WINTER'S PAUSE. Now, though we have to start at a date before this Bureau began its task, it is not very long before, for after the pathetically courageous fight which POLAND put up against the German hordes for a month in the fall of 1939, followed by the betrayal of NORWAY and the consequent withdrawal of the British Expeditionary Force, there was a lull of nearly six months before—to use the expressive cliché—the balloon really went up. BRITAIN used the time to start the preparation she ought to have made long before. FRANCE preened herself behind the Maginot Line while subversive elements within her borders grew in strength; Mr. Roosevelt tried out election-opinion with devices such as declaring GREENLAND in the Western Hemisphere and cuddling South American Republics into the Munro Doctrine camp; and neutral nations round the fringe of EUROPE kow-towed to or flirted with the Axis Powers, pretending to be pleased with this trade agreement or that non-aggression pact—just like so many half-feathered pullets in separate runs, solemnly signing contracts with a hungry wolf. *Apres ca, le déluge!*

THE GREAT ONSLAUGHT. It began in HOLLAND and BELGIUM towards the end of April 1940. Hitler had feinted in various directions with skilfully arranged 'troop movements' and no one could be certain where he would strike first. The Low Countries, having passively watched the lowering menace for several months, were swept away by an irresistible tide directly the floodgates were opened. Then, as the *Times* described it, the mighty scythe of the German mechanized attack shore clean through the great armies of FRANCE, swept back the isolated British to the sea, left the impregnable Maginot Line contemptuously alone, to surrender without a blow when the battle was over, and in three weeks of active war laid the proud Republic in the dust.

THE FIRST CRISIS. It is quite probable that any other nation than the British would have been so stunned by the magnitude of a disaster which cost them not only their principal ally, but threw all their own strategy hopelessly out of gear, that they would have succumbed there and then. A friend

of mine said to me the other day, with complete conviction, that Hitler lost the war at DUNKIRK. Well, that may be so, for it is certainly true that there was a moment just before that marvellous feat of arms, when imminent defeat stared BRITAIN in the face. So, since we remain undefeated, perhaps Hitler did then miss his one and only opportunity. The British Prime Minister had actually to warn the nation that they must expect to hear of the capitulation of the finest flower of their army, 300,000 of the best-trained troops in the world. At the best we expected some 30,000 to escape. In the event, by utterly marvellous co-operation and courage, it was the former number, and more, that reached the shores of ENGLAND and lived to fight another day. That feat was certainly one of the three events that changed the whole aspect and temper of the war,—even though the main German victory was so resounding that the cautious Mussolini hastened to range himself on the side of the conqueror.

THE SECOND CRISIS. The second came three months later. That army from DUNKIRK became the nucleus of the largest body of trained troops that has ever been assembled to defend the shores of BRITAIN. Defence was the unusual and sole role of the English then, for Hitler had decided to finish the war by the invasion of his principal enemy's country. The much-vaunted *Luftwaffe* soared away to obtain mastery of BRITAIN'S skies; the ports of conquered FRANCE were packed with German assault troops; to every harbour within easy sailing range of BRITAIN, from NORWAY to the Bay of Biscay stole transports and barges and fast motor torpedo-boats ready to take their chances against the British Navy, itself dispersed by pressing responsibilities in the Atlantic (the 'U' boat campaign), in the Mediterranean (the Italian Fleet), and in the FAR EAST (the threat to SINGAPORE from JAPAN). Well, the story is soon told. Just as it did in May, the desperate moment for BRITAIN passed. Those ships and barges never sailed, or if they did, they were bombed to blazes and the men in them fed to the fishes, —sometimes ready-cooked—because the preliminary victory in the air so necessary to their plans never eventuated. A hitherto almost untried R. A. F. so thoroughly took the measure of the *Luftwaffe*, that with greatly inferior numbers they completely repulsed the whole invasion scheme. In August and September the R. A. F. destroyed utterly over three thousand first-line German planes, and killed or captured perhaps three times that number of then irreplaceable air personnel,

at the same time visiting the Channel ports so frequently, daringly and effectively that even the victory-elated German troops there found it so hot that some of them were found to prefer their own concentration-camps for mutineers, to staying to practise embarkation manoeuvres !

THE SECOND PAUSE. Thus, for a second time Hitler was forced to pause, and while he paused, certain other forces, upon which alone BRITAIN could rely for ultimate victory, began to take shape and grow. It was then that we, this Bureau, first found ourselves able to trade on our convictions and not merely on our hopes ; it was then that we could first tell listeners, not so much that the war MUST be won in order that the EMPIRE and INDIA might even survive, but that, given every good man's support and sympathy, the war WOULD be won—for liberty of person, of thought and of religion, in short for everything that makes life worth living. For during this enforced pause, the British Commonwealth was getting into its military stride despite the vast length of its communications ; the tide of sympathy for our cause began to flow strongly in AMERICA ; in half a dozen ravaged lands signs were not wanting of the growth of a spirit of renewed hope, among which the most notable was the increase in numbers and efficiency of the Free French Movement ; and above all a resolute Prime Minister and Government at Home had really got down to the fundamental problem of a huge increase in munition-production and civil organisation.

DIPLOMATIC BLITZ. But the picture, even then, was none too rosy. Except for heavily increased bombing of industrial objectives in GERMANY we seemed to be unable to 'get at' our enemies. The best we could hope for was TIME, time to build, time to manufacture, time to arm, time to transport. Hitler, on the other hand, was still strong enough to overawe and, if necessary, force industrially and strategically useful neutrals into his orbit. The famous Pincer Movement, the attack on EGYPT and the Canal, the success of which would definitely cripple the Empire even if it did not mean the surrender of BRITAIN, was still very much on the tapis. Graziani had huge forces in North AFRICA, where outlying dependencies and colonies of ours had already had to be evacuated. At the end of the Mediterranean, ITALY was engaged in overawing the Levantine mandates; on the north of the Mediterranean, in the Balkan countries, RUMANIA caved in; YUGOSLAVIA came under heavy German pressure ;

HUNGARY disappeared down the German throat; TURKEY seemed shackled by her fears from or hopes of, RUSSIA; while at the western gate of the same sea, SPAIN was being importunately coaxed into taking sides with the Axis, and the Vichy Government was writhing helplessly in the toils of a conqueror who made no bones about his opinion of armistices, honourable or otherwise, as long as he could lay his bloody hands on the remainder of the French Navy and the French Mediterranean ports. Further, in order to frighten nations still sitting on the fence, in order the more to embarrass BRITAIN by dispersing her protective forces, and in order to impress the sphinx-like Soviet Government with the strength and invincibility of the New Order both in EUROPE and in ASIA, Hitler published the Tripartite Agreement which added JAPAN as a war-partner to GERMANY and ITALY.

THE THIRD CRISIS. Then took place the third of those providential events which the Germans curse as the acme of bad luck, (or mismanagement on some one else's part), but which may equally be taken as a sign of the inevitable triumph of *Right* over *Might*. Mussolini, anxious to have a bird in his hand rather than to have to extract one later from the thorny bush of Nazi overlordship, ordered the invasion of GREECE. To the world's astonished admiration, GREECE fought back—and to some tune! Whether by pre-arrangement or mere opportunism, the Allied tail went up! The Mediterranean Fleet, both Naval and Air branches, suddenly began to bite the Italians, driving their much-vaunted Fleet into the shelter of the Adriatic, and clearing the Middle Sea of anything that might either help Graziani in LIBYA, or embarrass our own Army of the Nile. The happy contagion spread. General Wavell, with a small but magnificently imperial force, sallied out from what had been hitherto purely defensive positions and began to hound the Italians back along the northern coast of AFRICA. SOLLUM fell, SIDI BARRANI fell, and now BARDIA has fallen, and British troops threaten TOBRUK. Just previously, up north across the sea, the irresistible counter-attack of the Greeks, through their own invaded land, over the Albanian border, past KORITZA and POGRADETZ and ARGYROCASTRO and KLISSURA, until their foes can only hold precariously on to ELBASAN and VALONA before they are finally pushed into their own Adriatic Sea.

THE SWING-OVER. And not only militarily and materially has the picture changed thus dramatically.

Whatever steps Hitler may take to rehabilitate his defaulting partner, Fascist ITALY's reputation is utterly gone, and with it inevitably some of the hitherto almost irresistible prestige of the Axis.

For proof let us note the reactions in still neutral States. Open rejoicing and a wave of confidence in EGYPT; a far-reaching trade agreement with loyal but wary TURKEY; openly growing resistance to German machinations in YUGOSLAVIA, in BULGARIA, in SPAIN, and even in VICHY; grave unrest in German-occupied territories, in RUMANIA, for instance, in DENMARK and in NORWAY. Not all of these will materialize perhaps, but it means for GERMANY, that each of these places has to be watched; there must be 'troop movements'; German forces must be 'massed on such-and-such borders'; bribes and inducements must grow in size; one 'ally' must be played off against another; ITALY must drop her territorial claims against FRANCE, for instance, lest the growth of Anglophile sentiment in poor, wounded FRANCE, make the Old Men of VICHY suddenly intractable and even dangerous. In other words, it is no longer a case of our but of the Germans, *being at a disadvantage from the enforced 'dispersal of force'*, and it must be remembered also that the wider the field over which the Swastika *must* fly, the more severe becomes the pinch of the British blockade. When '*les mangetouts*' (the 'eat-alls' as German occupation troops are called so bitterly in FRANCE) have pillaged the countries they have occupied, *they can get no more from anywhere*; and all the while sailing over safe (or at least comparatively safe) seas from every quarter of the globe, great and always-increasing masses of men, machinery and munitions come pressing in on Hitler's EUROPE.

A WARNING NOTE. I do not think I have painted too rosy a picture, of the new situation. *But please do not conclude that the war is over, or anything approaching that great desideratum.* Hundreds of historic buildings must crumble into rubble and dust, thousands of innocent women and children must perish from sudden death, disease or starvation, hundreds of thousands of brave men on land, sea and in the air will fight their last fight in 1941 and perhaps later. Hitler, foiled, furious, and facing a disappointed, hard-ridden people, is still enormously powerful, and, as is the way with those who promise hugely and begin too-successfully, is bound to attempt something spectacular; he has to try and break out of the encircling ring of circumstance—

and that too, very quickly, before that contracting circle crushes not only his beloved German 'lebensraum,' but the very breath from his own lungs.

One prophet says he will use his troops in South-West FRANCE to violate the Armistice terms, and march to the rescue of Mussolini and Fascism in ITALY. Another says that troop movements in HUNGARY and RUMANIA indubitably point to a dash for the DARDANELLES, TURKEY, SYRIA, PALESTINE and EGYPT. Yet a third insists that as long as the Channel ports are so heavily manned with Huns, as long as intimidatory bombs fall on EIRE, and AMERICA has to send troops to GREENLAND (!), an invasion of BRITAIN is the obvious expectation. Note the immense scope; note the possibility of any two of these being tried simultaneously; remember the several millions of highly trained and mechanised troops at his command, and the estimate of the 35,000 planes still remaining to him—then cease to speculate! Be only sure of this, that Hitler will try one or all of these things, or even something we have not thought of at all, not because he can still honestly believe that victory will be the outcome, but BECAUSE HE MUST.

In face of these likelihoods, I beseech you all to beware of complacency! There *is* a risk of this in INDIA—so far practically unaffected by the ravages of war. And I am not sure that this is not more dangerous than the anti-war-effort doctrine of muddle-headed political fanatics.

Even in PUDUKKOTTAI we see it—not so much in the mofussil as in this very town. For instance, are those educated people who so unmistakably prefer local small-talk and bridge to encouragement of say, the next-door lecture, or interest in the State's war-effort, so prophetically informed about the result of the greatest crisis that has ever faced mankind, that they can afford to be complacent? If mere gratitude for the fortitude and gallantry of Indian troops who, with the grand Imperial Army of the Nile, have so turned the tide of war and made INDIA's shores temporarily secure, does not goad them to set the more ignorant a loyal example, then let me suggest to them that it is by no means unlikely that Hitler will shortly push JAPAN into the war on the Axis side. The intransigeance of the THAI people is only a sign of the times—and SIAM is within flying distance of our nearest coast! A bombing plane, roaring down Main Street about 80 feet up, might sadly interrupt a good rubber!

No, no complacence, *please*! It is *effort* that is needed. The crisis of all history is upon us, and against Hitler's dire and actually impending threat, we, BRITAIN, INDIA, the EMPIRE, PUDUKKOTTAI STATE, have to put forth every possible effort. We must answer every call made on us, perform every job we are bidden to, with the same loyalty, confidence and whole-heartedness with which we faced the situation six months ago. But we shall do this the more happily and courageously because, whereas then we had nothing much more than the belief that good must triumph to sustain us, now we have an increasing conviction of total victory, derived from facts and examples, to inspire us.

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

9—1—41 to 15—1--41.

THE WATCH-TOWERS OF HISTORY.

THE Empire is on the threshold of great events—greater even than those of 1940. As Mr. Churchill told the London Society for the Promotion of Anglo-American Friendship on January 9, 'We stand upon the watch-towers of history and have offered to us the glorious opportunity of making supreme sacrifices and exertions for a cause which it may not be irreverent to call sublime.'

The place of America in the present titanic struggle was also defined by the Premier, when he said 'The British Empire is not going to give up the struggle, even if AMERICA were to fail to co-operate. Rugged and embattled, the Empire would hew its way through and preserve its life. But then it would be only an uneasy truce and the chance of setting mankind along the high road of human progress would be lost and might never return.'

THE AMERICAN ATTITUDE.

Typical of the American attitude is the speech made on January 7, by Mr. Bullitt, ex-UNITED STATES Ambassador to FRANCE, who observed, 'We know that the surest way to defeat the Axis Powers is for us (Americans) to go to war. But the American people at this moment, prefer to take the risk of a Totalitarian victory rather than go to war. In order to diminish that risk the UNITED STATES must give these nations what they need, not what we think we can comfortably spare—merchantmen, war vessels, aeroplanes, guns, munitions, steel, wheat. All that we give will be used in our defence.'

THE UNITED STATES BUDGET.

In some such spirit President Roosevelt introduced his Budget on January 8 asking for a grant of 25,000 million dollars (Rs. 7,500 crores) to carry out a three-year defence and armament production programme. In doing so he made it clear that the grant was to be used not only to protect AMERICA against aggression but also to strengthen the bulwarks of democracy against external pressure.

THE SUPREME DIRECTORATE.

A Supreme Directorate has also been set up (January 7) to speed up arms production in the UNITED STATES. It has been given full authority to formulate and execute policies for armaments. The Directorate consists of Mr. William Knudsen (Director-General), Mr. Sidney Hillman (Associate Director-General), Mr. Henry Stimson, Secretary for War and Col. Frank Knox, Secretary for the Navy.

THE BRITISH AID BILL (LEASE AND LEND BILL).

A bill to aid BRITAIN, and the democracies generally, has been introduced (January 10) by the Administrative leaders simultaneously in the Senate and the House of Representatives which will permit the President, *firstly* to manufacture or procure any defence article for the Government of any country whose defence is vital to the defence of the UNITED STATES, *secondly* to sell, transfer, exchange, lease or lend such articles, *thirdly*, to repair or recondition any such article, and *fourthly*, to communicate any information pertaining to defence.

A new 'Lease and Lend Bill' has also been introduced by Mr. J. Simpson of the Republican party on January 13, similar to the official bill in every respect except that it restricts help, for the present, to BRITAIN, and curtails the unlimited powers granted to the President to two years. Thus, as both the Democratic and Republican elements are in favour of the main features of the bill, it should have an early and easy passage through the legislature.

Mr. Wendell Wilkie, Mr. Roosevelt's late rival in the Presidential election, has blessed the bill subject to the above modifications and is flying across the Atlantic to BRITAIN to make a personal survey of the situation.

REACTIONS TO THE BILL.

The bill has naturally alarmed TOKYO, which regards it as a *de facto* declaration of war aimed particularly at JAPAN. The view of the American Press, as reflected in the *Detroit Free Press* is, 'The die is cast—we are at war without having declared war.'

MISCELLANEOUS.

A delegation of American officials is leaving for LONDON for formal legal business relating to the lease of air and naval bases.

The British Government is now negotiating with American Investment Trusts for the sale of certain British investments in the UNITED STATES.

UNITED STATES fighting planes are now flying in a steady stream for delivery to BRITAIN and are getting through 100 per cent. Even if the Germans should spot them on the way they are fast enough to outdistance them.

According to the latest Gallup survey of public opinion, 76 per cent. in the SOUTHERN STATES, 66 per cent. in the FAR WESTERN STATES and 63 per cent in NEW ENGLAND are in favour of aiding BRITAIN *at whatever cost*.

No UNITED STATES troops have been sent to GREENLAND, as had been rumoured, nor have any UNITED STATES air or naval bases been established there but the UNITED STATES will supply arms to GREENLAND as necessary.

THE NEW AMBASSADOR.

Lord Halifax, newly appointed to the British Embassy in WASHINGTON, will continue to attend Cabinet meetings till he leaves ENGLAND and will be treated during his absence as 'seconded' from the War Cabinet. If he arrives in summer for any consultation he will resume his functions and responsibilities as a Minister of the Crown. It is, as the *Times* puts it, an unprecedented but also a wise and far-sighted arrangement by which a direct share in the Government of BRITAIN is committed to a statesman who lives among the American people and is in immediate contact with their President.

Lord Lloyd has been appointed Leader of the House of Lords in the place of Lord Halifax.

LIBYA.

The latest figures of Italian losses in this theatre are 94,000 men, including 3,500 officers, 203 tanks, 589 guns and 11,000,000 rounds of small arms and machine-gun ammunition. Their loss in planes is 500.

During this week EL ADHEM (aerodrome) and BOMBA (seaplane base) have been taken and BENGHAZI, DERNA, MARTUBA, EL TMIMI, EL GAZALA, BENINA and BERKA have all been raided.

The Italian garrison at JYRABUB has been trapped and its surrender is only a question of time. It lies 50 miles from the Egyptian frontier and 150 miles to the south of TOBRUK. Marshal Graziani had fondly occupied it hoping to advance from here upon EGYPT by way of the SIWA oasis.

TOBRUK itself, ITALY's best naval base in LIBYA, has been cut off from the west. Long convoys of British and Australian contingents are converging on it with guns, tanks and supplies. Italian artillery is slackening for want of planes to direct its fire.

EAST AFRICA.

The Eritrean base of MASSAWA has been bombarded and a port north-east of KASSALA has been occupied.

In the KENYA sector BUNA, TURBI and EL WAK have fallen to our arms.

In a recent speech General Smuts revealed how British troops in the desert between KENYA and ABYSSINIA had immobilised an Italian army, 200,000, strong which would have otherwise proceeded to the help of Marshal Graziani in the north.

ABYSSINIA.

The Abyssinians themselves, who have been waiting for their revenge since 1935, have now intervened for the first time in the present war, and have, with the support of the R. A. F. driven the Itatians from GUBBA on the Blue Nile. If this retreat also could be cut off it would be the signal for a general revolt.

Hailé Selassié, Emperor of ABYSSINIA, who is now at KHARTOUM, has already met a number of his old chiefs, and his soldiers, now serving under ITALY, are deserting in hundreds and rallying to his standard raised at GAJJAM. In a recent message to *Reuter*, the Emperor stated, with warm confidence: 'I will tear down the figure of the wolf erected by the Italians in ADDIS ABABA and in its place will reinstate a white marble statue of the Lion of Judah—My people know I am near by; the revolt is making great headway, thanks to the whole-hearted support of the British Government. I will personally lead them to victory. It is the writing on the wall and the days of my former Italian ally who betrayed my country are numbered.'

Meanwhile, there is growing evidence that the Italian colonists in East AFRICA and particulary, in ABYSSINIA, are caught in a trap. Faced with the spread of rebellion, and anxious for the safety of their families, the settlers are seeking shelter in French SOMALILAND. The British Government have expressed their willingness to grant facilities and safe conduct to Italian women and children *if their evacuation is agreed to by Rome* Such consent of course would be an admission of defeat.

General Smuts speaking at JOHANNESBURG on the 11th said that the role of SOUTH AFRICA in 1941 will be to clear ABYSSINIA and SOMALILAND of the enemy. The prophecy is in course of accomplishment.

ALBANIA.

The Greeks are maintaining their advance in this sphere. On January 10, KLISSURA, a key-town on the road to VALONA, was taken. ITALY is in a sad plight, indeed. In the last few days two of her generals have resigned, two have died in aerial accidents and twelve have been taken prisoners. Now General Soddu, commanding in ALBANIA has also resigned, 'for reasons of health' and General Cabellero, who as Chief of the General Staff, might have hoped that his campaigning days were over, has succeeded. There is evidently a shortage of military leaders in ITALY willing to conduct Mussolini's disastrous compaigns.

ITALY.

Frantic efforts are being made in ITALY and GERMANY to minimise the recent defeats and keep up the appearance of confidence. 'The whole of LIBYA may be given up' says GERMANY, 'as it is of no military importance'. The Italian Cabinet stigmatised Roosevelt's condemnation of the Axis as 'peurile' and, strange to say, calls BARDIA 'an Italian victory' on the ground that the Italian army, though defeated, had not lost its morale!

ITALY is hard pressed for explosives owing to shortage of T. N. T. (Trinitrotoluol)

Here are two little incidents illustrative of Italian miltary standards.

On January 9, wounded Italian soldiers in the hospital at SALONIKA were attacked by the Italian planes themselves.

Under cover of three torpedo boats, and two destroyers, 200 Italian soldiers invaded the Greek Island of SZALL, which contained only a couple of inhabitants. These two persons concealed themselves in a cave during the attack and emerged unscathed as soon as the Italians re-embarked.

FRANCE.

At President Roosevelt's personal request the British Government have agreed to allow free passage through the blockade of a shipload of foodstuffs and clothing *to be distributed to the children of unoccupied France by the American Red Cross.* If this consignment arrives safely further quantities will follow.

RUMANIA.

Fighting, accompanied by terrorism and sabotage, has broken out between the moderate section of the Iron Guard led by M. Sima in support of General Antonescu's Government and the extreme elements who claim to represent the real doctrines of the late M. Codreanu, who founded the Iron Guard movement. Many deaths are reported. The German troops are presumably present to support the Government. Field Marshal List, a *Blitzkrieg* expert has arrived. The severing of telephonic communications in RUMANIA for three days was first reported to be due to political trouble, but is now ascribed to the weather.

BULGARIA.

There is no confirmation of a reported German ultimatum to BULGARIA but a smoke-screen of Nazi propaganda has been concealing Hitler's machinations in that quarter. Judged from the utterances of M. Filoff, its Prime Minister, BULGARIA is sitting on the fence. In a speech at RUSTCHUK on the 12th, he said that Bulgarians must be neither Germanophile nor Anglophile, and that the Nazi and Communist systems of Government were both unsuited to BULGARIA. At the same time he desired further extension of territory to rectify 'injustice' and added that 'the gigantic cataclysm caused by the speeches and decisions of President Roosevelt may provoke a World War.'

GERMANY AND HER OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

Owing to the R. A. F. activities in the RHUR the production of German coal has declined by 40 per cent. For this reason, and also owing to shortage of wagons, there has been a considerable fall in the export of coal to ITALY.

The Norwegian Government have declared all appointments in German-occupied NORWAY to be contrary to established laws, and null and void.

An epidemic of scurvy has broken out in HOLLAND and as it is believed to be due to Hitler's 'grain and rye loaf' it is called the 'bread scurvy'. The Dutch think that *ersatz* material is used in the making of flour. 20,000 people are fed at Communist centres at UTRECHT alone. Much of HOLLAND's food has been impounded, and many thousands of Dutch workers have been transported to GERMANY.

RUSSO-GERMAN AGREEMENTS.

The mountain which has been in labour for months has brought forth a mouse at long last. M. Molotov's visit to BERLIN, with a train-load of specialists, has now resulted in a Soviet-German Economic agreement regulating exchange of goods until August 1942. By this pact GERMANY hopes to receive large quantities of grain and oil in return for machinery and other manufactures on the barter principle. As there is nothing new in the agreement since RUSSIA's ability to supply and to transport are strictly limited, the importance given to it in GERMANY must be due to a desire to offset AMERICA's promise of unlimited supplies of war materials to BRITAIN.

Two other agreements have also been signed between the Soviet and GERMANY, one defining the frontiers of LITHUANIA and the other effectuating the repatriation of Germans from LITHUANIA, LATVIA and and ESTHONIA.

FAR-EAST.

THAILAND has proclaimed a 'state of war' with FRENCH-INDO-CHINA, with the avowed object of 'rectifying' her frontier along the Mekong river. The THAILAND Army is advancing into CAMBODIA, the most westerly province of FRENCH-INDO-CHINA and has already occupied large tracts. SISOPON, PAILIN and SIEMREAP have been raided. French forces have abandoned the Aranya Prada sector. Martial law has been proclaimed in 24 provinces and the Government is being moved from HANOI to SAIGON.

INDIA.

The recent utterances of Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, Premier of the Punjab, who has now returned from a visit to the Western Desert, must fill all Indian hearts with pride and gladness. He has told us that the

part played by our brethren in the capture of SIDI-EL-BARRANI was second to none, and that the Indian soldiers were all not .only in good heart but also in good health. Their prestige with friends and enemies alike was very high. They were in such good fettle that they were prepared to take on 'anybody and anything'. They have sent a message through Sir Sikander that they would not return to their mother-country till victory was achieved.

The Mhow Military Training School in INDIA which has facilities for training 600 officer cadets is still short of 100 students for want of suitable candidates. The Selection Board of the School point out; "Neither an athlete who is stupied or lazy, nor a well-educated man, who is obese or of sedentary habits, can survive the concentrated course of six months' training. Equally unpromising was the common type of candidate who had been sitting idle at home, living on his father for some years after leaving school or college. Some candidates who went into business immediately after matriculating compared favourably with B. A's and M. A's in general knowledge and intelligence............ Any candidate who was too strictly orthodox to mess with fellow officers of other communities was unsuitable."

AIR-RAIDS.

Except on January 7, when there was forced inactivity owing to bad weather, the R. A. F. has been busy during the whole week attacking the naval bases and the interior of GERMANY and ITALY. The German aerodrome on the island of BORKUM has been destroyed. Day-light raids on the *Luftwaffe* commenced on January 10 when, escorted by a hundred fighters, British bombers crossed the French coast and machine-gunned air-craft on the ground from a low level.

ITALY's attempt to bar the road to ITALY by mounting anti-aircraft guns on the Alps has proved futile. Ignoring them, the R. A. F. flew to ITALY and attacked the Royal Arsenal at TURIN and dropped copies of Mr. Churchill's recent address to the Italian nation.

There were practically no raids on LONDON on the 7th, 8th and 9th. Since Thursday night, with the improvement of weather conditions, the *Luftwaffe* has been busy, but all fires have been extinguished by A. R. P. workers, Home Guards, and Fire-Workers. According to present arrangements there are at least 20 watchers for every bomb that falls.

Westminster Cathedral, Westminster City Hall and the Temple have sustained damage in recent raids.

WAR AT SEA.

British Mercantile shipping losses for the week ending at midnight on January 5, were four vessels totalling 14,687 tons. There were no Allied or neutral losses. The loss is the fifth lowest for any week since the beginning of the war. The weekly average loss his 69,666 tons.

Several reasons have been assigned for this big drop—bad weather which has grounded a good number of the enemy mine-laying, bombing and reconnaissance air-craft, reduction in German U-boats owing to R. A. F. pounding, and the growing strength of British escort flotillas.

R. A. F. Raids over GERMANY, GERMAN-occupied EUROPE, ITALY, ITALIAN AFRICA and ALBANIA.

Date.	Targets.	R. A. F. & Greek aircraft losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
6—1—41. (Monday).			
DAY :—			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	Three enemy merchant vessels off the NORWEGIAN coast.	...	1 ship damaged.
	Enemy tankers off the DUTCH coast...	...	A direct hit on one.
NIGHT :—			
	No R. A. F. activity.		
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	The aerodrome at EL ADHEM ...	...	Captured.
	The foreshore and other military objectives inside the town of TOBRUK.	No loss.	2 planes shot down and many damaged. Heavily damaged.
	DERNA and **MARTUBA** ...	...	Successfully raided.
	The harbour, a power station and the ships at TRIPOLI.	...	Explosions followed fires; many ships ablaze.
	ALBANIA.		
	The harbour, and other objectives in VALONA.	1 plane.	2 planes.

Date.	Targets.	R. A. F. & Greek aircraft losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
7—1—41. (Tuesday).			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	No air activity owing to adverse weather.		
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	The harbour and the defences at TOBRUK	...	...
	The power station and the submarine base at MASSAWA.	...	Fires started.
	ALBANIA.		
	Military stores and buildings in EL-BASAN.	...	Several buildings hit; many fires started.
	Aerial fight in ALBANIA ...	No loss.	3 planes.
8—1—41. (Wednesday).			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
NIGHT :—			
	Naval dockyards at WILHELMSHAVEN and EMDEN.	...	Many fires started.
	Aerodrome and barracks at BORKUM Island.	No loss.	Devastation every-where.
	ITALY.		
	Battleships, Merchant shipping, Docks, and Railway station at NAPLES.	...	Many vessels damag-ed; severe damage to railway lines and buildings.
	PALERMO (SICILY)	...No loss.	...
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	GUBBA on the Blue Nile, west of Lake TSANA.	...	The Italians were driven out and the British have occu-pied it.
	Aerodromes at GAZALA ...	...	2 planes.
	MARTUBA ...	...	11 planes set on fire and many others damaged.
	BENINA ...	...	Many damaged.
	TMIMI ...	...	7 planes.

Date.	Targets.	R. A. F. & Greek aircraft losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
8—1—41.	**(Wednesday.)**—*cont.*		
	ITALIAN AFRICA—*cont.*		
	Warehouses and shipping at BENGHAZI	...	4 or 5 ships directly hit.
	Defences and other objectives at TOBRUK.	...	Heavily damaged.
	Italian convoys North-west of IARABUB.	No loss.	...
9—1—41.	**(Thursday.)**		
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	NIGHT :—**Synthetic oil plant** at GELSENKIRCHEN.	...	Whole factory blotted out by big fires.
	The Inland ports of DUISBERG,—RUHRORT and DUSSELDORF.	...	...
	Factories and blast furnaces in the RUHR.	...	...
	An oil storage plant at ROTTERDAM...	...	Set on fire.
	Docks at BREST, FLUSHING, DUNKIRK and CALAIS.	...	Battered.
	A Railway bridge near EGERSUND (NORWAY).	2 planes.	Severely damaged.
	ITALY.		
	Naval vessels, the harbour and an oil storage plant at MESSINA (SICILY).	No loss.	Many fires started.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Italian troop concentrations at a town in East AFRICA.	...	...
	Aerodromes at BENINA and BERKA...	...	Many aircraft on the ground destroyed.
	ALBANIA.		
	Enemy objectives in the battle region.	...	...
10—1—41.	**(Friday.)**		
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	DAY:—		
	Aerodromes in occupied Northern FRANCE	...	Many aircraft on the ground damaged.

Date.	Targets.	R. A. F. & Greek aircraft losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
10—1—41.	**(Friday.)**—*cont.*		
	GERMANY and GERMAN occupied EUROPE—*cont.*		
	Aircraft on the ground in the forest of GUINES (near CALAIS).	...	Big fires started.
	A Railway Station near CALAIS	...	...
	Gun-posts and troops near VISSANT	...	...
	NIGHT :—		
	Dockyards at BREST	...	A large vessel hit; many fires started.
	Shipping in the harbour at LE HAVRE	...	...
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	The CAPRONI workshops at MAI ADAGA.	...	Fires started.
	Buildings at ASMARA	...	...
	Troop concentrations in the TASHAI–TESSENEI Area	...	Heavy casualties.
	YAVELLO (in ABYSSINIA)	...	2 planes; many destroyed.
	Enemy Infantry and transport at DOBEL.	...	...
	ALBANIA.		
	Troops and Mechanised convoys in ALBANIA.	...	Heavily damaged.
11—1—41.	**(Saturday.)**		
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	DAY :—		
	Troops drilling on a square at DOMBURG.	...	Heavy casualties.
	The Mole at ZEEBRUGGE	...	...
	Barges on the canal at MIDDELHARNIS (NETHERLANDS).	...	Many damaged.
	Ship building yards at WILHELMSHAVEN.	...	2 planes.

Date.	Targets.	R. A. F. & Greek aircraft losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
11—1—41.	(Saturday)—*cont.*		
	ITALY.		
	The Royal Arsenal at TURIN	...	Big fires started.
	Another target near TURIN	...	No loss.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Shipping and the harbour at BENGHAZI.	...	...
	The sea-plane base at BOMBA.	...	...
	ALBANIA.		
	Reconnaissance over the Enemy rear.	...	...
12—1—41.	(Sunday.)		
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	DAY :—		
	Enemy troops in trenches near the beach, as well as shipping and ground defences near the FRENCH and BELGIAN coasts	...	Heavy casualties. E-boats and many small vessels hit Heavy damage.
	Two enemy snpply ships off NORWAY.	...	Direct hits on both.
	NIGHT :—		
	Oil refineries at REGENSBURG and OSTEND.	...	Fires and explosions started.
	Docks at BREST.	...	Heavily damaged.
	A warehouse at WASSET	...	Fires started.
	Occupied harbours at LORIENT and LE HAVRE.	...	Battered.
	PORT MILITAIRE	...	...
	Aerodromes at VANNES, CHARTRES, EVREUX and MORLAIX.	No loss.	Fires started and aircraft on the ground damaged.
	ITALY		
	Oil refinery at PORTO MARGHERA (near VENICE)	1 plane.	Fires flared up ; buildings dertroyed.

Enemy Raids over Britain, British Territories and Greece.

Date.	Targets.	Enemy aircraft losses.	R. A. F. & Greek aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
7—1—41. (Tuesday).			
	BRITAIN.		
DAY :—			
	LONDON and **parts** of East Coast regions ; MIDLANDS.	...	Slight damage and a few casualties.
NIGHT :—			
	No air activity.	...	...
	ALBANIA.		
KORITZA.		...	40 houses damaged ; 100 casualties.
8—1—41. (Wednesday).			
	BRITAIN.		
DAY :—			
	ANGMERING (SUSSEX coast) ; **a few points** in the LONDON area ; **a town** in the MIDLANDS and **a town** in East ANGLIA.	...	Slight damage and a few casualties.
NIGHT :—			
	No air raid owing to adverse weather	...	...
9—1—41. (Thursday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
NIGHT :—			
	LONDON area, LIVERPOOL and other MERSEYSIDE **towns,** the MIDLANDS and North-West ENGLAND.	2 planes	Slight damage everywhere and a few casualties. Fires very soon put out.
	ALBANIA.		
	A hospital in SALONIKA.	...	Wounded Italian soldiers in the hospital injured.
	BRITISH MEDITERRANEAN POSSESSIONS.		
	The Aerodrome at MALTA.	5 planes	No damage.

Date.	Targets.	Enemy aircraft losses.	R. A. F. & Greek aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
10—1—41. (Friday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
NIGHT :—			
	A Residential district in a South-coast town.	...	No damage or casualties.
	PORTSMOUTH	2 planes	No damage.
11—1—41. (Saturday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
DAY :—			
	A town in East KENT.	...	A few casualties. Some damage caused.
NIGHT :—			
	LONDON area	...	A few killed or injured
	Places in South-EastENGLAND.	...	Little damage.
	ALBANIA.		
	Advancing GREEK troops in ALBANIA	...	...
12—1—41. (Sunday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
DAY :—			
	No activity.	...	...
NIGHT :—			
	LONDON and the THAMES ESTUARY, LIVERPOOL, a North-East **town** and **a town** in WEST ENGLAND.	...	A few people killed. Fires which started were quickly put out. Slight damage
13—1—41. (Monday).			
	BRITAIN.		
NIGHT :—			
	A South-West **town**, **a town** in the WEST COUNTY.	...	Heavy damage.
	LIVERPOOL and **widely separated places** in WALES.	...	Slight damage and a few casualties.
	GREECE.		
	CORFU.	...	...

SIDE LIGHTS.

Bewilderment and Bluster. In this article last week, I suggested that the Germans are "all dressed up and no place to go," that the initiative is lost to them, but that they have *got* to do something. I was told last night on the radio exactly what they were going to do - which is kind of them! You never heard such mouthings! Long before the Americans can give us any help worth the name, BRITAIN is to be defeated—or was it destroyed? And we are supposed to lie quivering in our beds and wait helpless for that doom, which, as the rhodomontade explained, could be summed up in the dread word 'Invasion'. Well ....

(*a*) We have heard that word before—and so have that mass of hypnotised dupes that surround the German loud-speakers, and it didn't amount to much in the actual event.

(*b*) Since it *is* one of the desperate expedients that Hitler may be forced to try, and it is so blatantly advertised, we had perhaps better expect something quite different, elsewhere and elsehow.

(*c*) If, however, invasion is the dearest project of Hitler's fevered dreams, we make him a present of the information contained in an article in this Bulletin, about BRITAIN's defences. It might make any but a frustrated megalomaniac think twice—but it is, alas, difficult to hope that Hitler either reads or thinks.

* * *

The difficult choice. It is difficult not to be sorry for Marshal Petain. He may dislike democracy as a political theory, but for a genuine patriot and a man of honour, his present position must be appalling. Hitler is engaged in a race against time. He intends to strike at BRITAIN, and on a tremendous scale and he is doing his utmost to make FRANCE his chosen instrument for the effort. There is a mass of cloudy conjecture about Laval, and Flandin, and Darlan; but about the nature and extent of the pressure on the aged soldier there is no doubt whatever. ITALY is being abandoned as an ally; the French Fleet, French Mediterranean bases, and an easy road through at present unoccupied FRANCE into ITALY, and beyond, are to take Mussolini's place in the list of German assets in Nazism's final gamble for world-domination. To that end every kind of threat and bribe is being used to make Petain forget the Armistice terms, jettison his own honour, and betray his own people who still look to him as to no other Frenchmen for guidance.

Hitler asks, with dreadful persistence, whether or not the Vichy Government bases its policy on the assumption of a German victory !

Roosevelt proclaims that the Totalitarians will not win the war, and sends Admiral Leahy to VICHY to expand this thesis of inevitable victory for the Democracies.

Sometime very soon, Étienne Petain will have to make a choice. No other Frenchman, now or ever, will be able to answer – for FRANCE !

The Factors.

Hitler's 'hand.'

(*a*) 2,000,000 French prisoners of war are at his mercy.

(*b*) He can offer FRANCE most of the once-Italian Colonial Empire (except MOROCCO which may have to be kept for SPAIN.)

(*c*) He can appeal to the religious sympathies of the Marshal and all devout French Catholics by a guarantee of religious freedom within a Roman Catholic Alliance of FRANCE, SPAIN, and ITALY.

(*d*) He can also promise, for what a Hitlerian promise is worth, considerable amelioration of FRANCE's economic servitude.

If Petain capitulates, Hitler's culminating attack on BRITAIN would be to close the Western Mediterranean, bottle up the British Fleet there, isolate the British Armies in the Middle East, and with French and Spanish help, cut British communications across the North and South Atlantic. Then ... massed air attacks on BRITAIN by day and by night, and ... Invasion !

The Allies' 'hand.'

(*a*) The elation of the French people, within and outside FRANCE, at the recent British and Greek victories and the general and well-substantiated increase in faith in a British triumph.

(*b*) The completely decisive effect on the ultimate outcome of the war of the recent Presidential announcements, of unstinted and endless supply of war-materials by AMERICA to the Allies.

(*c*) A French soldier of great influence, and with the same notions of military and national honour as Petain, is in NORTH AFRICA, with 400,000 trained, though unemployed, troops, who have been delivered by British victories from capitulation to the hated Italians.

(*d*) The personal character of Marshal Petain, and the affection with which he is regarded in his country. If he is thrust out of power, there will be anarchy in FRANCE. If he yields, in order to avoid worse horrors for his people, and there is an attempt to mobilise French forces naval or military, against their quondam ally, there is more than a chance of a new French Revolution.

Well, if Hitler runs such risks as these in his effort to gain French ships and bases, it will be some measure of how desperate his need for a quick decision is.

Ruling the waves. In our lecture last week we gave, as one of the reasons for sitting quiet under the strict naval censorship, the average Briton's invincible feeling that "the Navy is all right!" And isn't he entitled to that feeling? General Wavell's brilliant thrust, and the gallant counter-invasion of the Greeks would simply not have been undertaken, unless from the very entry of ITALY into the war, the Navy had reached out for and grasped the command of the Mediterranean. Nor was this accomplished merely by superior numbers. Think of the calls on the Admiralty at that time. The collapse of FRANCE alone almost doubled our maritime responsibilities round the coasts of EUROPE; there were calls for reinforcement in the FAR EAST; and ever-increasing demand for escorts in the Atlantic. Yet from the outset, the Navy in the Mediterranean retained the initiative, and, aided by the Fleet Air Arm, has crippled the Italian Navy and driven it back to its lairs.

Nor does it leave it there. Consider the significance of a too-little-advertised exploit on Dec. 17. The Straits of OTRANTO are only 45 miles wide. Two strong Italian bases guard them, BRINDISI on the west and the island of SASENO on the east. A fleet of battleships, cruisers and destroyers sailed calmly through the neck, brought the big guns of the capital ships forcibly to bear on the important Italian port of VALONA, and—and here is the marvel—sailed safely out again. The Italians, with due warning of the presence of their enemy, could have—ought to have—concentrated opposition of every kind to bar their egress. But did they? No, "The Navy is alright!", and they know it. Incidentally in the last war, there was never a capital engagement in the Adriatic. We—with the help of ITALY then—kept the Austrian fleet completely bottled up there, but to sail into it, or rather to sail safely out, was thought a shade over the odds.

* * *

Manana. The word means the same as our 'nalaiki' and is applied generically—a gentle gibe—to the Spaniards, just as 'nalaiki' is to Tamils. And what is SPAIN's 'tomorrow'? The 'tomorrow' after the Civil War was not much to boast about, and the days after that can hardly be much happier, with the spectre of starvation stalking the land unless BRITAIN and AMERICA assist her, and the jackboot and whip of the Hun ready raised, unless she welcomes Hitler's hordes over the Pyrenees !

Food, they say, is the dominant factor in Spanish policy these days. The Generals, and except for the Falangists, the great majority of the people, are resolved that SPAIN shall NOT be dragged into another war. Bluff or no bluff from the Pyrenees, they will resist an invasion. But the voice of Hunger is stronger than reasoned counsel, and general discontent has led to serious disturbances in many places, just when amenableness and unity was hoped for by the wiser heads of Government. Fortunately, perhaps, scarcity is generally considered to be due to incompetence, corruption and excessive buying by GERMANY, ITALY and VICHY, but SPAIN's *manana* cannot be very bright when there are *guerilleros* at large with rifles and machine-guns round MALAGA and TOLEDO and in SIERRA NEVADA and the ASTURIAS. In BADAJOS and CORDOBA prisoners have mutinied, and have been joined by the Civil Guard, and at VIGO they report, "No bread." General Franco will have to rely on stouter allies than the proverbial Spanish fatalism implied in our generic appellation to his country, if he is to re-establish that ancient realm. Why not come down off the fence and openly accept the willing help of the only powers with an altruistic policy, BRITAIN and AMERICA ?

THE LAST WEEK OF 1940 REVIEWED
TWO ENIGMAS AND ONE GREAT EVENT
HITLER'S ATTITUDE TO ITALY'S REVERSES .
SIGNIFICANCE OF LAVAL'S DISMISSAL.

by

Wickham Steed.

TWO enigmas and one great event now dominate the war outlook. The great event is the resounding, perhaps decisive, victory of the British and Allied forces in Western Egypt and Libya. One of the engimas is the policy of Hitler in the presence of the mishaps or disasters suffered by his Italian partner in the Berlin Rome Axis. The other enigma is the dismissal of Laval by Marshal Petain and the appointment of Flandin to be Foreign Secretary in the Vichy Government.

The great event and the enigmas may not be unconnected with each other. Hitler might ignore, or pretend to ignore, the humiliation of Italy by Greece. He may not have been altogether displeased at Mussolini's failure to subdue the Greeks. If Mussolini had succeeded in gaining control of the Greek harbours and islands the position of Italy in the Axis would have been strengthened. Then it would have been harder for Hitler to reject the Italian claims to large slices of French territory and conseqently harder for Hitler to gain the collaboration of France in the establishment of the "New Order" in Europe. Since Mussolini has proved incapable of defeating even so small a country as Greece there could be no question of satisfying the Italian demands on France.

So **up to a point** Hitler may not have regretted the failure of Mussolini's attempt to force his hand. But it is quite another matter when Italy meets with disaster in a major effort assigned to her by Axis policy—the invasion and conquest of Egypt. Apart from the moral effects of the British victory upon North Africa and throughout the Near and Middle East, **Hitler has now to reckon with the danger that Italy may be entirely driven out of the war.** Then Great Britain would be in undisputed control of the Mediterranean and enabled to utilise a large part of her strong Mediterranean fleet against Hitler's submarine counter-blockade of the British Isles.

If I judge the situation rightly, Hitler is now compelled to face a difficult problem. To save Italy from capitulation he might be obliged to support her with considerable forces. To send large German forces to Italy would resemble a German military occupation of that country and thus wound Italian national pride. To send no German help would be to challenge unfavourable comparison with the action of Great Britain and France in the last war. Then

after the Italian defeat at Caporetto three British and three French divisions were immediately sent to Italy and these divisions were used so tactfully that Italian national feeling was not wounded. It is uncertain whether German divisions in Italy would be quite so tactfully used.

German official journals have recently declared that the best if not the only way for Germany to help Italy was to attack Great Britain with the utmost intensity so as to destroy British power in the British Isles. As an abstract strategic principle this argument seems logical. Practically it is weak in two respects. Should Italy collapse before Germany can destroy Britain, or should Hitler fail in future as he has failed hitherto to win the Battle of Britain, the position of Germany would certainly not be improved by the loss of the southern end of the Berlin–Rome Axis.

Whatever may the true reason for the dismissal of Laval and the appointment of Flandin **all the evidence yet available points to a German plan to replace Italy by France as Hitler's chief associate.** Laval is actively anti-British. He has never been burdened with scruples, personal or political, and he would certainly have been ready to bring France in the war against Britain at Hitler's bidding if he would thus have strengthened his own position in France. He would have supplanted Petain and accepted all Hitler's terms. How Petain, whom the British still regard as an honourable, though mistaken, man, could ever have accepted Laval as his deputy is a mystery still unexplained. Petain's dismissal of Laval seems to show that at last Petain has found him out.

Like Laval, Flandin is pro-German, but, unlike Laval, he is not violently anti-British. He is an opportunist. Three or four years ago he was pro-British. He became pro-Nazi when he believed Germany was destined to rule Europe. Now he sees Italy beaten by Greece and disastrously defeated in North Africa. He is too intelligent to suppose that the weakening of Italy can strengthen Germany. **He may think France now has a chance to increase the price of French collaboration with Germany.** He may even reckon with the possibility that Germany will not defeat Britain. If this is so he would not wish to estrange the British irremediably. He is a man of shrewd brain and weak character. Hitler may find him less satisfactory to deal with than the unscrupulous Laval.

The next few days may provide the answers to the two enigmas without changing the importance of the British victory in Egypt and Libya. Whatever the answers may be, I think the great event marks a turning point in the war.

BRITAIN'S STOUT DEFENCES.

"She Has To-day The Biggest, Most Powerfully Armed Force Ever Known Inside The Country."

(With acknowledgments to the Illustrated Weekly of India).

IN four centuries Britain has taken up arms to defend the liberties of men from five continental tyrants who, having subdued Europe, decided that England must be crushed before they could complete their ideas of supremacy.

The tyrants were Philip of Spain, Louis XIV of France, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, and Hitler, fifth and latest of them. Of the first four, only Philip of Spain went to the length of sending out an invading force—the Great Armada. The rest ranted and threatened but never set sail for England.

To-day the most important question of the war is whether Hitler will attempt what much greater leaders than him have failed to do. At the time of writing, the question is still an open one, but recently we have been warned by our leaders that there is still a danger of the Nazis attempting this supreme gamble.

REASON FOR WARNING.

Excellent reasons can be given both for and against Hitler attempting the greatest *blitzkrieg* he could ever undertake, but such arguments are after all purely academic.

Britain's leaders know that the Nazis are perhaps less concerned about the exact state of the moon and tide than about causing the British people to believe that the danger of invasion has passed.

Once that idea can be developed, the strategic value of catching the country unprepared would more than offset all the Channel currents and difficult beaches put together. Hence the warnings which have recently been given in England.

As a matter of fact, as things stand at present, England is excellently prepared to meet any Nazi horde which could possibly attempt a landing. There are four main branches of this defence system—probably the most intensive the world has ever seen. They are the Army, the Navy, the Royal Air Force and the Home Guard.

In dealing with the threat of invasion, the first line of defence consists of course of the Navy and Air Force which, because of the spheres in which they operate, might well prevent an invasion attempt from ever materialising.

POUNDING THE PORTS.

As we already know, the Air Force has very severely raided the ports along the Channel coast of the Continent from which an invasion might most easily be launched.

This pounding is perhaps more important than might appear to the layman, because the modern mechanised army must have a real port and its equipment, and not merely a landing place from which to operate.

The technique of war has advanced a long way since Julius Caesar launched his invasion from Gaul's northern beaches, each man carrying his own equipment as he waded through the waves to the Roman galleys. **Nowadays machines like lorries and tanks need winches and wharves for embarkation.**

Thus the R. A. F.'s steady attacks on such places as Cherbourg, Le Havre and Calais, not to mention Norway, in addition to wrecking the Nazi fleets of barges and the dumps of ammunition and arms assembled for embarkation, also damage the wharves and port equipment thus making the business of the launching of an invading force all the more difficult.

DEFENCES HOLD.

The R. A. F. also has the job of preventing the German air force from establishing a "bridge-head" on the British side by shattering our defences at any given point. The R. A. F., though by no means at their full strength as yet, have proved that in conjunction with the anti-aircraft gun batteries they are quite capable of stopping the Nazis from bombing any given area accurately or intensively enough to "sterilise" it of British opposition.

Since the Nazis cannot obtain mastery even over their own invasion ports in France and Holland, the R. A. F. also ensure by their reconnaissances that there can be hardly any element of surprise in an invasion attempt.

Could the R. A. F. be chased away, the Germans would prepare to launch an invasion as and when it suited them. The R. A. F. have shown, however, that when there is any chasing to do, they, and not the *Luftwaffe*, will do it.

THE NAVY.

Then the Navy. Since Germany has hardly any warships worth speaking of, and since the Italian and French Fleets, even if Hitler could use them, are shut up in the Mediterranean, any invading force which sets sail across the Channel, must reckon with the might of the British Navy.

It might be thought that the German long-range guns mounted along the north coast of France would be an effective reply to our control of the sea. As a matter of fact, they are not; for not only has the Navy also got its own long-range guns, but the British side of the Channel is similarly equipped. In any case, convoys going up and down the Channel have proved the inability of the Nazi gunners to close this seaway to shipping.

But supposing the invading force of barges, tugs and small steamers managed to evade the British naval patrol and approach the English coast, then the other two defence arms—the Army and the Home Guard—would immediately come into action.

First the Army. It should be emphasised that Britain has to-day the biggest and most powerfully armed force ever known inside the country. At least 2,000,000 young men have joined the armed forces since war broke out.

Actual army figures are not of course disclosed in wartime, but we may recall that over 300,000 men of the British Expeditionary Force in Flanders were rescued from Dunkirk, that other British forces returned from France at the Armistice; that many more age groups have been called up from civil life; that large contingents of men have arrived in Great Britain from Canada and Australasia, and that there are forces representing many of the conquered nations of the Continent at present in Britain and co-operating with the main British force.

Altogether these amount to a very impressive array of armed might. It is true that in recent months men have been sent from Britain to the Middle East. But it would appear that these are surplus to what the authorities consider necessary to protect the country, and that they have been sent abroad to supplement the already big Commonwealth Army under General Wavell **only after more men have been trained to take their place.**

TRAINING CHANCE.

So far as the British Army is concerned there has been a lull since our forces left France at the time of the French Armistice. This lull has been employed to the full in training; in adjusting technique by the experience gained in Norway and Flanders, and in practising with more and better weapons.

Had Hitler been able to carry his great westward rush of early last summer across the Channel he would have found a very much less powerful force awaiting him than is the case to-day.

"ROPING OFF" INVADERS.

Since then the army has had time to carry out its plans of defence in full. The artillery batteries which surround the coast (quite apart from the anti-aircraft gun batteries), the machine gun nests at every strategic point where an enemy landing either from sea or air can be attacked, the traps and the mines, and also the tanks and guns which can be rushed from one area to another according to the way in which an invasion attempt might develop—all these arms are ready and their attendant soldiers thoroughly trained in their use.

The main point in British defence strategy must of course be to smother any invading force before it can consolidate itself. It is possible, and even probable, that in the event of a German attempt at invasion, landings would be made at more than one place, in order to confuse the defence. The British plan is to "rope off" and isolate such forces and destroy them.

With a Nazi army on the beach there would be less room than usual for battle by manoeuvre. The coastal guns and the many pill-boxes which have been built are intended to annihilate such opponents—plain slaughter in fact. Not for nothing has the British Army paid so much attention to machine guns of all types—including the sub-machine gun, the "Tommy Gun" of Chicago's gangsters, a particularly lethal weapon at fairly close range.

These are some of the details which the British authorities have released to the world. For obvious reasons the most important details are profound military secrets which any invading force would discover at their cost.

THE HOME GUARD.

Quite possibly in such an invasion attempt Hitler would try some version of his now familiar trick of dropping parachutists behind the main lines of defenders. It worked very successfully in the Low Countries and Northern France where airborne soldiers were able to prevent the destruction of important links in communications—such as bridges—and to seize such vital points as air ports.

Before Holland was attacked the Dutch army boasted that by blowing up bridges and dykes they could render their country impassable within a very few minutes of an invader appearing on the frontier. That boast was never substantiated because parachutists or fifth columnists killed the men detailed to carry out such destruction before they could act, or else sabotaged the destruction system.

Britain has profited by that lesson. Her answer to a threat from the rear—whether parachutist or fifth columnist—is the Home Guard, the 'parashots' as they have been called.

The Home Guard—it numbers over a million—is recruited from men who are not liable to be called up for the other armed forces. They give their services for nothing. Their main work is to relieve the army of all kinds of scattered duties, and by acting as the eyes of the nearest military force to enable swift action to be taken against any enemy who may gain a footing by surprise.

In certain circumstances they are authorised to attack enemy troops—especially in cases where these are newly landed and have not yet had time to organise themselves.

In order to do this, they are armed with rifles and have been trained in the use of trench mortars and various methods of tank destruction, including the use of the petrol bomb—known as the "Molotov Cocktail."

This training is based on the belief that the Nazis' rapid advance across Northern France could have been held up and even disorganised if the villages had been properly defended. In France such steps were not taken and, instead of resisting the enemy, the villagers became refugees and blocked the roads for their own troops. Risk of the same catastrophe has been obviated in England by organising the Home Guard into town and village groups, each charged with the defence of a certain area.

Another angle of their duties is to see that roads which the enemy are likely to use are efficiently blocked, and that open spaces which might be used as landing places or even bases by invading aeroplanes, are rendered useless by placing obstacles in the way.

DAY AND NIGHT WATCH.

The result is that the whole of England is on the watch night and day. Forces and fortifications have been arranged to give the maximum adaptability to whatever form the attack may take, and it must be remembered that as the most heavily railroaded and roaded country in the world, England's own lines of communications would be extremely difficult to dislocate whether by aerial bombardment or by any other means. And finally the immense determination of a united country to smash Nazism must count for much.

CAN HITLER MOVE SOUTH?

WHY THE FUEHRER WANTS TO REACH THE MEDITERRANEAN

DANGER OF EXTENDED COMMUNICATIONS.

WOULD SPAIN OR ITALY WELCOME GERMAN TROOPS?

by

Vernon Bartlett.

There was a time when Hitler could be found in the early hours of the morning studying plans for a new Berlin with an architect friend, for like most dictators he has the ambition to leave great monuments which will be remembered when he himself is as dead as many of the victims of his Gestapo agents. Now those plans must be pushed aside to make room for a map of the Mediterranean.

Little though Hitler and Mussolini may like each other, one cannot wish to see the other overthrown. Even if it is true that the Italian attack on Greece took place against the wishes of Germany, the Fuehrer MUST MAKE SOME EFFORT TO PREVENT THE MEDITERRANEAN FROM BECOMING MARE BRITANNICUM—A British Sea. At a time when his submarines are so active he must prevent that addition to our available shipping which would be supplied if all of it bound for the Far East could make the Suez route instead of the South African one.

But what can Hitler do? All his threats and exhortations will fail to inspire the ordinary Italian with enthusiasm for a war which can be of no benefit to him. The Abyssinian adventure has been a bitter disappointment to those who believed stories of the wealth that was to come from that unfriendly territory. Before Mussolini came into the present war he encouraged his followers to shout for Tunis, Corsica, Nice and Savoy, but only Germans are on French soil. The system of postponing rewards always until tomorrow is discouraging to a people who were already hard up and hungry when their leader obeyed another leader's order and sent them out to fight.

IN OTHER WORDS ITALY IS BEATEN, although her admission of defeat may be postponed and may still cost many British and Italian lives. Hitler must wonder how he can now close the Mediterranean. To send an army over the Brenner Pass, as he is reported to have done, would be expensive and ineffective. It would look too much like an army of occupation and

there could be no surer way of making the Italians actively pro-British than to fill their towns and villages with German garrisons.

The Greeks have barred the road to Istanbul—that road which so tempted Hitler's predecessor Kaiser Wilhelm. It would now be obvious folly for the Nazis to attack through the Balkans since they would add Turkey and probably Yugoslavia to the list of their enemies and yet if they reached the Mediterranean they would find the British in secure possession of Crete and other island bases.

Can the Nazis then advance through France or Spain? The strange story of the collapse and revival of Pierre Laval is important for two reasons. It emphasises the extent to which Marshal Petain, however sincere in his patriotism, is dependent for his position upon the whims of Hitler. FURTHER IT INDICATES GROWING RESISTANCE ON THE PART OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE TO THE POLICY OF ABJECT SURRENDER.

France could not prevent a German march southwards to Marseilles or Toulon, but the probability that this FURTHER AGGRESSION WOULD PUSH THE FRENCH COLONIES AND THE FRENCH FLEET INTO ACTIVE CO-OPERATION WITH THE BRITISH has surely been increased by this latest evidence that the Vichy administration is not its own master. "A GENERAL IN THE HANDS OF HIS FOE," WROTE NAPOLEON, "HAS NO POWER TO GIVE ORDERS; TO OBEY THEM IS CRIMINAL."

German troops could reach Spain, but Spain is hungry and short of military equipment.

Hitler then might feel confident that he could in a very short while reach the Mediterranean *via* Spain and even that the Falangists would come actively to his support. The latest Spanish action in dismissing without warning all foreign employees of the administration of Tangier might be an encouragement to him to press forward towards the Straits of Gibraltar.

But in Spain, even more than in Italy, anything in the nature of a German military occupation would lead to serious incidents and even in such peaceful villages as those of Norway small German garrisons have become seriously demoralised. Besides, what general, remembering Napoleon's march to Moscow, would readily extend his lines of communication across so many thousands of kilometres of unfriendly territory? Hitler, I imagine, can get little comfort from his study of the map of the Mediterranean.

WHY JAPAN DOES NOT DESIRE WAR WITH U. S.

WILL ECONOMIC PRESSURE PRECIPITATE A CONFLICT?

TOKYO'S HOPES OF A GERMAN VICTORY

PLANS FOR EASTERN ASIATIC HEGEMONY

*(The **Daily Telegraph** Shanghai Correspondent cables the following.)*

I have come away from a fortnight's visit to Japan with a rather definite conviction that *Japan and the United States are not as close to war as is generally believed.*

All the old conflicts and hazards are of course still there, and so is the great imponderable whether or not the United States will fight rather than permit Japan to expand southward, but Japan's strength and weaknesses, fears and ambitions, stand out in bolder relief than ever before.

Most observers agree that if a Japanese-American conflict occurs it will be the result of one or both of the following contingencies : first, a bold Japanese thrust into the South Pacific, second, America's entry into the European war.

In the light of these basic considerations here are a few simple truths about conditions in Japan which are likely to have a bearing one way or the other on Japanese-American relations.

There is scarcely anybody in Japan who wants war with the United States. However, many Japanese believe that it will be necessary eventually to fight such a war so as to remove Anglo-American opposition to the New Order in Eastern Asia.

The Japanese intend to postpone the day of reckoning as long as possible in the hope that an ultimate German victory in Europe will change the situation in their favour and perhaps oblige the United States to withdraw voluntarily from the Far East.

Moreover most Japanese realise that without help Japan could *not at present hope to bring a war against the United States to a successful decision.* The nation's energies are fully absorbed by staggering problems on the Asiatic continent with uncertainty even there that they can be surmounted.

Even if Japan's grandiose programme of Asiatic hegemony and economic self-sufficiency runs according to schedule, it would be at least ten years before she could hope to battle with the United States on anything like even terms.

Yet, despite these sober facts, **the Japanese people are more determined than ever to go through with their programme in the Orient,** be the end glory or failure. No amount of non-military pressure will deflect the Japanese from their ultimate aims, though it is apparent that American economic and political pressure already have produced positive results.

It has greatly slowed up Japan's productive capacity and has helped to dislocate her economic system. It has certainly impeded and delayed her advance southwards.

Were it not for fear of war with the United States, there is little doubt that the Japanese would to-day be masters of the Dutch East Indies, either by invasion or by political conquest. The bland assurances of Japanese Government leaders that Japan's only purpose in the Indies is economic cannot be taken seriously.

Though marking time momentarily, the Japanese armed services have made it patently clear that they will be satisfied with nothing short of political hegemony. The absorption of the Dutch East Indies is being delayed for a more opportune moment while the gentle ageing, diplomat Kenchiki Yoshizawa Japanese delegate to Batavia, tries to get what he can from the Dutch by orthodox diplomatic methods.

Contrary to the popular American belief, there is no indication in Japan that the intensification of American economic pressure would alone provoke the Japanese to the point of war. As a matter of fact the Japanese are expecting bigger and broader American embargoes.

However, so anxious are they to avoid armed conflict with the United States at this time, that they would probably tolerate almost any amount of American economic flagellation without going to war.

Of course there is always the danger that economic pressure might precipitate a Japanese invasion of the East Indies and this would become a probability should the Dutch Indies and British Malaya shut off Japan's supplies of oil and iron ore.

The conviction is growing in Japan that the life or death of that country depends on a German victory in Europe.

ROOSEVELT AND 1941.

THE Axis Powers are not going to win. That was point one of President Roosevelt's broadcast to the American people last Sunday, a "fireside talk" which was at the same time a message of confidence, a call to effort, and a warning of peril. "Frankly and definitely", said the President, "there is danger ahead". The Axis Powers, that is to say, are not going to lose the war by some unalterable process of nature. They are to be defeated by the labour and sacrifice, united and unstinting, of all who lie under the shadow of their swollen ambitions. And that means a large proportion of the earth's inhabitants.

Though directed to his own countrymen, this talk by one of the world's foremost living men has carried its force wherever it has been heard or read —even in Germany, where official disappointment at the wastage of vast sums on Nazi propaganda and intrigue in the Americas has been expressed in a petulant denial that Hitler "ever contemplated" transatlantic expansion. As to that denial, the President had one word: "Nonsense".

The "American appeasers" whose case has been so convincingly exploded by the very actions of the Axis bandits, have dwindled steadily in number, and the President's unanswerable indictment of Nazi-ism has probably reduced them still further. But it was to be expected that "isolationism" would die hard in America. In any country it is an attractive theory—if it works. France's Maginot Line was a colossal achievement, but it has not saved France. To the people of the United States, the Atlantic Ocean seemed to be a safe Maginot Line until the fact was accepted that only the British Fleet prevented it from being turned. To excited Nazi propagandists, the English Channel presented itself as a Maginot Line behind which the same fate was preparing for Britain as for France. Roused in time, Britain fought and held the gap, rejecting in one tremendous gesture of courage the comfortable theories of a millennium of freedom from invasion.

India too has her Maginot Line, the vast natural fortifications of the Himalayas. The lesson of the spreading flood of barbarism is that those fortifications could be turned if the common enemy were unopposed in his manoeuvres to find the gap. The year 1940 has closed with a heartening demonstration of the resolution and ability of Britain, the Empire and their Allies to strike where the threat develops. The year 1941 will see—and perhaps very soon—a further hostile thrust that must be met with equal steadiness.

COSMOPOLITANA

1. "Mohammedans ! Spread these, my words, in all the homes of your cities and villages even to the last shepherd's tent. You know that I am a man sparing in promises, but when I promise, I fulfil."

(*Benito Mussolini, Tripoli, March 1937.*)

2. "If the United States will stand aside...we offer them Canada, Newfoundland, the Bahamas, Bermuda, Jamaica, Australia and New Zealand."

(*Dr. Mario Appelius, Popolo D'Italia, Late December 1940.*)

3. "If India is invaded to-morrow and there is no other alternative but to defend my country, I will not hesitate to take up arms and fight."

(*Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Lahore, December 30, 1940.*)

4. "There is little hope at present that Marshal Chiang Kai Shek's régime in China will perish."

(*Col. Matsui in 'Nichi Nichi Shimbum' quoted in Moscow, Dec. 30, 1940.*)

5. "We know that the tide which is turning in our favour will carry us into the battlefield of our own choosing, and to a decisive blow for which we are preparing."

(*Mr. Frazer, New Zealand Premier, in a broadcast, Dec. 30, 1940.*)

6. "Bardia is a terrible warning—woe to the heedless !"

(*Sig. Ansaldo, broadcast to Italian Forces. Jan. 7, 1941.*)

7. "The British have turned the desert—bitter enemy of human beings—into an ally."

(*Nazi Radio spokesman, Jan. 7, 1941.*)

8. "The die is cast......we are at war without having declared war."

(*Detroit Free Press, U. S. A. Jan. 7, 1941.*)

9. "The blood which Indians have shed for the sake of Egypt will keep alive in this country memories of the gallant action they took for the sake of our common weal and cause."

(*Message from Hassan Sirry Pasha, Egyptian Premier, to Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, Jan. 10, 1941.*)

Examples of Misleading Statements in Enemy Broadcasts to India and the Near East for the period December 30, 1940—January 5, 1941.

A.—BROADCASTS IN ENGLISH.

NEW YEAR WISHES.

THE Fuehrer has addressed a 3,000-word New Year message to the German people.

Let us examine some of his statements as he dips into history.

No Claims.

" My attempt to avoid the outbreak of war with England and France in 1939 was not only coldly rejected by the entire democratic world, but also evoked a storm of indignation............Germany made no claims on England or France, and this war was entirely unnecessary".

Hitler could have avoided war by keeping his troops outside Poland. That he knew the risk he was taking is proved by his pact with Russia a week before he began the invasion of Poland. The only reason no claims were made on France or England was that Hitler was not yet ready to make them.

Peace Offensive.

" On October 6, 1939, I invited France and England to lay down arms. This attempt proved futile''.

Since Germany refused to withdraw from Poland, Britain and France were bound both in honour and in self-defence to continue the fight.

Fall of France.

"The first units which retired from the struggle were British divisions. They were animated by one desire—to evacuate the Continent under cover of Dutch, Belgian and French troops".

If their one desire was to evacuate the Continent, why were British troops shipped to France at all? When the B. E. F. was evacuated from

Dunkirk, Dutch troops had ceased to offer resistance, King Leopold of the Belgians had capitulated and French troops were defending another section of the Front.

ITALY'S "LIVING SPACE".

The German radio reports (January 2nd) a speech made in Florence by the Italian Education Minister, Signor Pavolini, who said "the 100-years-long struggle of the Italian people for sufficient living-space must now be crowned with success", and concluded that the present war was the "only logical conclusion" of Fascist achievements.

When Italy entered the war, her Empire comprised 2·8 per cent. of the area of the world and only 2·5 per cent. of the world's population. In other words, she had more than her share of living space.

In an article on Lebensraum, published in January 1939, Professor Obet of the German University of Breslau, described the living-space of the Italian Empire as "more than sufficient".

Mussolini himself, on the 5th of May 1936, declared that, with the settlement of the Abyssinian question, Itaty joined the ranks of the satisfied nations. She has, however, left those ranks since.

SPAIN AND TANGIER.

The Nazi radio (January 2nd) twists Senor Suner's statement on the Tangier situation to make it appear that Spain's action was not dictated by Axis threats. Berlin reports Senor Suner as having said, "The Powers who fought on the side of Spain in the War of Liberation had fully recognised that Spain was entitled to Tangier".

In actual fact, the Spanish Foreign Minister said that the difficult situation caused in Tangier at the outbreak of war was aggravated by Italy's entry. "This critical and very dangerous moment required immediate action on Spain's part".

So it becomes evident that at least one of Spain's motives in taking over control of Tangier was to prevent the Italian fleet from using it as a base.

WITHOUT COMMENT!

"Italian submarine commanders and crews are sharing the same risks as their German comrades in the Atlantic, because, since the Italian Fleet has made the Mediterranean prohibited to British shipping, we do not need so many submarines in that sea".

B.—BROADCASTS IN ASIATIC LANGUAGES.

BRITAIN'S FOOD POSITION.

The German broadcast of January 1 referred to the message of the British Minister for Food, and gloated over England's alleged difficulties in respect of supplies. If the German claims were correct, imports of food would be expected to occupy an increasingly large share out of the total imports since the war, particularly in recent months. In actual fact, recent statistics show that precisely the opposite tendency is working. Thus, while in the ten months ended October 31, 1938, imports of food, drink and tobacco represented in value 46·5 per cent. of the total imports into Britain, this had fallen in the same period of 1939 (which included two war months) to 44·4 per cent. and in the same period in 1940 were as low as 38·8 per cent. These figures show that **so far from the food supply being endangered by enemy action against shipping and ports, Britain has been able to devote a substantially increased proportion of her shipping and foreign exchange resources to materials of war.**

PLOT AGAINST IBN SAUD.

The Italian and the German propagandists who recently accused Britain of having murdered her own distinguished Ambassador to the United States, the late Lord Lothian, have during the week, come forward with the equally absurd suggestion that the British Secret Service had a hand in the attack on Britain's honoured friend—King Ibn Saud. The Italians had, in fact, given the game away by their haste to accuse Britain even before the world had been told of the conspirators' arrest.

It is now known, however, that **Sherif Adel Hamid Ibn Saud**, leader of the plot to assassinate King Ibn Saud, **was in Berlin interviewing high Nazi officials in the summer of last year.** He returned to Egypt only three months ago, and obtained a visa to go to Arabia on the grounds that he wanted to take part in the pilgrimage to Mecca. It is also established that the other five men implicated in the plot were all his servants.

'MIGHT' OF THE LUFTWAFFE.

On January 2, the Nazi broadcast pompously proclaimed that the German Air Force was mightier than the British Air Force.

In spite of the fact that Germany has been re-arming for the last six years and that her *Luftwaffe* is numerically stronger, Britain has more than held her own, both in defence and attack. During 1940, German losses in raids over Britain numbered 2,993 while losses of British fighters over Britain numbered 847. In the Western Front and France the British lost 375 machines and the Germans 945.

PROGRAMME OF LECTURES

OF THE

Pudukkottai War Information Bureau.

LECTURE XXVII.

1941—

January 18, Saturday	...	Town Hall	...	6.30 p. m.
19, Sunday	...	Avoor	...	9.45 a. m.
		Tirugokarnam	...	5.30 p. m.
20, Monday	...	College (B) Tamil	...	10.25 a. m.
		Rani's School	...	10.25 a. m.
		Alangudi	...	5.30 p. m.
		Rangiam	...	5.30 p. m.
21, Tuesday	...	College (A) English	...	10.25 a. m.
		Chery School	...	5.30 p. m.
		Perungalur	...	5.30 p. m.
		Viralimalai	...	5.30 p. m.
		Ponnamaravathi	...	5.30 p. m.
23, Thursday	...	Ramachandrapuram	...	5.30 p. m.
		Konapet	...	5.30 p. m.
24, Friday	...	C. S. M. School	...	10.00 a. m.

LECTURE XXVIII.

January 25, Saturday	...	Town Hall	...	6.30 p. m.
26, Sunday	...	Rasiamangalam	...	9.45 a. m.
		Nanjoor	...	9·45 a. m.
		Vayalogam	...	9.45 a. m.
27, Monday	...	Virachilai	...	5.00 p. m.
28, Tuesday	...	College (A) English	...	10.25 a. m.
		Rani's School	...	10.25 a. m.
		Puduppatti (Ponnamaravathi).	}	5.30 p. m.
		Adanakkottai	...	5.30 p. m.
		Rayavaram	...	5.30 p. m.
29, Wednesday.		College (B) Tamil	...	10.25 a. m.
		Kilanilai	...	5.30 p. m.
31, Friday	...	C. S. M. School	...	10.00 a. m.

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